

## Message Text

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ACTION EB-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 NRC-05 SOE-02 AID-05 CEA-01

CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00 DOE-11 H-01 INR-07 INT-05

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 OMB-01 PM-05 USIA-06 OES-07

SP-02 SS-15 STR-06 TRSE-00 ACDA-12 XMB-02 IGA-02

IO-13 PA-01 PRS-01 /139 W

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ENRG, IT, US

SUBJECT: US-ITALY ENERGY WORKING GROUP: FOLLOW-UP TO DECEMBER 9  
MEETING

REF: STATE 298600

1. SUMMARY: GOI PROPOSES BILATERAL COOPERATION ON RADIOACTIVE WASTE MANAGEMENT. THE FIRST STEP WOULD BE AN EARLY MEETING (PREFERABLY JANUARY 1978) OF ITALIAN EXPERTS AND EXPERTS FROM BATELLE NORTH WEST (HANFORD) ON HIGH LEVEL WASTE (HLW) CONDITIONING, INTERMEDIATE STORAGE OF SOLIDIFIED HLW, DISPOSAL OF SOLIDIFIED HLW IN GEOLOGIC FORMATIONS, AND MEDIUM-LEVEL WASTE CONDITIONING. GOI IS ESPECIALLY ANXIOUS TO OBTAIN U.S. EXPERT VIEWS ON A PLANNED ITALIAN PILOT PROJECT FOR VITRIFICATION OF HLW (ESTER PROCESS). END SUMMARY.

2. THERE FOLLOWS THE ENTIRE TEXT OF A NOTE ENTITLED QTE OUTLINES OF ITALIAN R AND D ACTIVITIES ON RADIOACTIVE WASTES END QTE. THIS NOTE ACCOMPANIED THE ITALIAN PROPOSAL FOR THE ABOVEMENTIONED EXPERT MEETING AND IS INTENDED TO SUGGEST AREAS OF POSSIBLE BILATERAL COOPERATION. A FULLER  
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DESCRIPTION OF THE ITALIAN WASTE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM IS BEING  
POUCHED.

3. BEGIN TEXT: OUTLINES OF ITALIAN R AND D ACTIVITIES ON R.A. WASTES MANAGEMENT.

1. PRESENT PLANNED ACTIVITIES IN THE FIELD INCLUDE THE

FOLLOWING AREAS:

- HIGH LEVEL WASTE (HLW) CONDITIONING
- INTERMEDIATE STORAGE OF SOLIDIFIED HLW
- DISPOSAL OF SOLIDIFIED HLW IN GEOLOGIC FORMATION
- MEDIUM LEVEL LIQUID WASTE CONDITIONING

2. HLW CONDITIONING. HEALTH AND SAFETY LICENSING AUTHORITIES HAVE PRESCRIBED THAT THE TWO EXISTING REPROCESSING PILOT PLANTS (EUREX AND ITREC) SHOULD BE EQUIPPED, AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, WITH ADEQUATE HLW SOLIDIFICATION PLANTS TO CONVERT EXISTING AND FUTURE HIGH LEVEL LIQUID WASTES PRODUCED BY PLANT OPERATION. AN IN POT LEVEL VETRIFICATION PROCESS, ON WHICH R AND D ACTIVITIES WERE CARRIED OUT SINCE MANY YEARS (ESTER PROCESS) HAS BEEN SELECTED. AFTER A NUMBER OF LAB SCALE COLD TESTS THE PROCESS WILL NOW UNDERGO ACTIVE TEST IN HOT CELL EXPERIMENTS. THE PRESENT PROGRAM CALLS FOR:

- DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION OF A COLD PLANT FOR VETRIFICATION OF (COLD) SIMULATED WASTES, IN ORDER TO TEST EQUIPMENT PERFORMANCE: POT DIAMETER WILL BE 15 TO 20 CM AND THE POT HEIGHT WILL RANGE FROM 1 TO 2 METERS;
- DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION OF THE ACTIVE PLANTS TO BE COUPLED WITH EUREX AND ITREC: AS FAR AS POSSIBLE COLD AND ACTIVE PLANTS SHOULD HAVE THE SAME CAPACITY AND CHARACTERISTICS.

3. INTERMEDIATE STORAGE. A LARGE STORAGE POND FOR POWER PLANTS IRRADIATED FUEL IS CURRENTLY IN THE DESIGN STAGE AND LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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WILL BE IN OPERATION, ACCORDING TO THE PRESENT SCHEDULE, IN 1982. THE POSSIBILITY IS CURRENTLY UNDER ASSESSMENT TO USE THIS POOL ALSO AS AN INTERMEDIATE STORAGE BASIN FOR VITRIFIED HLW PRIOR TO FINAL DISPOSAL.

4. DISPOSAL IN GEOLOGIC FORMATION. A MULTIANNUAL R AND D PROGRAM TO DISPOSE OF WASTES IN CLAY FORMATION WAS STARTED IN ITALY TWO YEARS AGO: THE PROGRAM IS CARRIED OUT BY CNEN IN THE FRAME OF A CEE SPONSORED EFFORT TO EVALUATE ON A MULTINATIONAL BASIS THE POTENTIAL OF SEVERAL POSSIBLE GEOLOGIC FORMATIONS. IF THE PRESENT SURVEY OF CLAY PROPERTIES (THERMAL, MECHANICAL, WATER LOGGING, ETC.) COUPLED WITH FIELD ASSAY IS ENCOURAGING, A DEMONSTRATION PLANT COULD BE ENVISAGED BY THE END OF THE 1980'S.

5. MEDIUM LEVEL WASTE MANAGEMENT. MINOR IMPORTANCE IS ATTACHED TO THIS CATEGORY OF WASTES, ALTHOUGH A LARGE VOLUME OF EFFLUENTS OF THIS KIND IS NOW STORED AT REPROCESSING PLANT SITE. THE SOLUTION SO FAR ENVISAGED IS BITUMEN EMBEDDING. TO THIS EFFECT A PLANT HAS BEEN DESIGNED BASED ON FRENCH TECHNOLOGY AND CONSTRUCTION WORK IS EXPECTED TO START IN 1978. END TEXT.

BEGIN LOU: COMMENT: EMBOFFS BELIEVE THAT THIS PAPER DOES NOT RPT NOT REPRESENT A WELL-DEFINED SET OF PROPOSALS FOR CO-OPERATION. NEVERTHELESS, THE PROPOSED EXPERT MEETING COULD BE A GOOD OPPORTUNITY TO REVIEW ITALIAN WASTE MANAGEMENT PLANNING AND TO EVALUATE WHETHER THE ITALIAN R AND D PROGRAM IS LIKELY TO PRODUCE TIMELY AND ADEQUATE RESULTS. FAILURE OF THE ITALIAN PROGRAM COULD IMPACT DIRECTLY ON THE LIMITED U.S. OFFER TO STORE SPENT FUEL AS WELL AS ON OTHER U.S. POLICY INITIATIVES.

5. ACTION REQUESTED: THAT THE DEPARTMENT ADVISE US WHETHER THE USG INTENDS TO PARTICIPATE IN A MEETING OF EXPERTS TO REVIEW ITALIAN RADIO-ACTIVE WASTE MANAGEMENT. LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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END LOU.HOLMES

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## Message Attributes

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